

# MEROZ CURSE

FOR NOT 8-23/  
HELPING THE LORD

Against the *Mighty.*

BEING

*The Substance of a Sermon, Preached on*  
a day of Humiliation, at S. Sepulchers,  
LONDON, December 2, 1641.

By that powerfull and Godly *Divine,*  
Mr. STEPHEN MARSHALL.

Published in one sheet of Paper, (not by the Author) but by a Lover of the Truth, for their good especially that are not able to buy bigger books.

Being a very seasonable Subject, wherein all that either out of policy or sloth, refuse to helpe the LORD, may see their danger; and they that are willing are called, and directions given to them, both what manner of persons they ought to be, and what they ought to do to helpe the Lord.

Wherein also every true Christian may see, that though they be never so weak or poor, yet they may, and ought to helpe the Lord, and by what means.

*Ezekiel 22.5 Ye have not risen up in the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel, so stand in the battell in the day of the Lord.*

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## M E R O Z Curse.

*Judg. 5. 23. Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord, Curse the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to helpe the Lord, to helpe the Lord against the mighty.*



His Verse containes a Curse against a whole City, and all in it; wherein we may consider these particulars:

1. A duty that should have beene performed, and that was, a comming out to the helpe of the Lord against the mighty, the omission whereof was the cause of the curse.
2. The persons cursed, and they were the inhabitants of *Meroz*.
3. The commander of the curse, *The Angell of the Lord*, to wit, Christ Jesus himselve, who is the Angell of the Covenant, and Captaine of the Lords Host.

In the duty that should have beene performed, we may consider, first, the parties they should have helped, *the Lord*: secondly, against whom they should have helped the Lord, and that is, *against the mighty*.

In the persons cursed, we may consider, first, what the curse was; and that I do confesse I cannot tell, whether it was fire or pestilence; but this most certaine, Gods curse is the ruine of those people on whom it lights: secondly, we may consider what this city *Meroz* was; and for that, I shall tell you, I cannot finde in the whole booke of God this city mentioned once againe, and therefore cannot certainly tell you where it was situated, onely this we may certainly conclude, that it was neer unto the place where the Lords people were in danger of their enemies.

I have begun this Text in another Congregation, I will therefore give you the brieve heads of what I have elsewhere more largely delivered, and so come to that which remains.

First, from the consideration of the parties against whom they should have holpen, *the Lord*, it is said they were mighty; whence we have observed this point.

*Doctr.* That the mighty ones of the earth do many times oppose the Lord. Secondly from thence we have also observed:

That

That Gods people should not be afraid to oppose the mighty, when *Doffr.*  
the cause is the Lords.

Secondly, from the consideration of the parties whom they should  
have holpen, they were the people of God, and yet the Lord calls it his  
own people, whence I observe :

That to helpe Gods people, is to helpe the Lord. *Doff.*

Thirdly, from the consideration of this neerenesse to the people of  
God in regard of habitation, I observed :

That the neerer a people are to Gods people in distresse, the more is *Doff.*  
their helpe required, and the greater is their sinne, if they doe not helpe  
them : this I applyed to our selves, in regard of that case of *Ireland.*

Fourthly, from the consideration that the curse extends to all the in-  
habitants of the city, I observed :

That there is neither man nor woman, but they may afford some *Doff.*  
help to Gods people in distresse, if they have grace in their hearts ; thus  
farre have I gone already, and now the maine point that I intend to in-  
sist upon at this time, is this.

That they are all cursed that helpe not the Lord, that is, that helpe not *Doff.*  
the Lords people in the time of their distresse ; for the prooffe of this  
point, observe but that reprehension of *Moses, Numb. 32. 16.* to the chil-  
dren of God, and the children of *Ruben, Shall your brethren, saith he, go to  
warre, and ye tarry here ? no by no meanes.* And so our Saviour, in *Mat. 25.*  
I will say, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devill & his  
Angels, for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave  
me no drinke.* But I will stand no longer on the prooffe of the point, but  
come unto the use of it, which I doe principally intend to stand upon.

And first of all, is it so, that they are all cursed that helpe not the Lord *Vse.*  
against the mighty ? then surely they are cursed with a heauey curse, that  
elp the mighty against the Lord : but I hope there be few or none such  
in this congregation, and I desire not to speake much to them that be  
scent ; yet if any of you that hear me, have any friends that are guilty  
of it, I pray you tell them what a fearfull condition they are in, that set  
themselves against the Lord.

But there are others, who are not so bad, as to helpe the mighty against  
the Lord, & yet not so good as to helpe the Lord against the mighty, but  
stand as neuters at such times when it is hard to say, whether the Lord  
or the mighty will prevaile ; and of these there are two sorts.

The first sort do it out of policy, as now at this time, the Church of  
God in *England*, by reason of the mighty, hath been long under tyran-  
nicall government, and the Lord we hope, is now at warres with them,



why there are some politicians, that stand looking on to see which side will prevaile. And if the Lord should now reform this government, and so prevaile, why then they would be on the Lords side, but if the mighty should prevaile, which the Lord forbid, then they would be on the mighties side. But as *Gideon* said to the men of *Succoth*, when they refused to give morsels of bread to his people that followed after *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, Kings of *Midian*, when the Lord hath delivered them into mine hand, *I will tear your flesh with thornes of the wildernesse, and with bryers*, so say I to such, if the Lord prevaile against the enemies of his Church, the Lord will make them smart, be sure of it, for that you will now afford him no helpe against them.

2. The second sort are such as refuse to help the Lord, not so much out of policy as out of sloth and negligence, like unto the men of *Labesh Gilead*, that went not to warre with their brethren against the *Benjamites*: but let such consider what the *Israelites* did unto them, by reason of this their sloth and negligence, as you may read, *Judg. 21. 8*, &c. to wit, how they fell upon them and destroyed them, because they came not up to *Mizpeh* to the Lord.

The next use shall be for exhortation to you all, is it so, that they are cursed that help not the Lord against the mighty? why then brethren, as you desire to be freed from this curse, and to obtaine a blessing at the Lords hands, be exhorted to put forth your hands now to the help of the Lord, I pray you look on me as on one that commeth amongst you this day to beat a drum in your eares, to see who will come out to follow the Lambe. Now then beloved, so many of you as are willing, come, and I will give you direction what to doe, that you may all of you afford some helpe to the Lord at this time.

And first let me tell you, that the Lord doth not require your help so much for any need he hath of it, as for to honour you thereby: for beloved, you are to know, that it is an honour to help the Lord, the Lord as I may say scornes to have help from every one: no, you must be first qualified before you be meet to help the Lord, and that with these three things.

1. First, you must be godly, or else you are unfit to be helpers of the Lord: the Lammes followers must be such as are chosen and called, and faithfull, they must be holy men, and holy women, therefore, you that are ungodly persons, believe it, you are not calld not to this help of the Lord.
2. Secondly, you must be selfe-denying persons; you must deny your own profit, your own ease, your own friends, yea & al that you cald your own; the Apostle *Paul* writing to the *Philippians*, saith, *he hath none*.

like minded to *Timothew*, and in the next verse he gives the reason, saying  
 for all seek their own, and not the things of *Iesus Christ*. Therefore I say, *Phil. 2. 21.*  
 you can never be fit to help the Lord, untill you put off all that is your  
 own, and say to *Christ*, as *Ruth* said unto *Naomi*, *Whither thou goest I* *Ruth. 1. 16.*  
*will go, and where thou dwellest I will dwell: thy people shall be my people,*  
*and thy God my God.*

Thirdly, you must be such persons as have a love to the Church; for  
 beloved, you shall meet with so many rubs in the way, so many discour-  
 ragements to flesh and blood, that if you have not a great love to the  
 cause of *Christ*, you will be subject to turn back from the Lords cause  
 when there is most need of your help, therefore, alluding to that of  
 the Apostle, *1 Cor. 13.* I say unto you, the most excellent way is love,  
 it is that which constitutes a man to be a meet follower of *Christ*; you  
 know it is said of *Jacob Gen. 29. 20.* That the seven yeares he served  
 for *Rachel*, seemed unto him but a few dayes, because he loved her; even  
 so brethren, if you get a love to *Christ* and his Church, you will wil-  
 lingly help the Lord, though you meet with some difficulties, there-  
 fore never rest, untill thou hast so much love, as to say, as I remember a  
 godly Minister said, I praise God, I am not troubled at any crosse, but  
 at the afflictions of Gods Church, nor I care for no welfare so much, as  
 for the welfare of *Christs Church*.

But it may be some will say, O Sir, but how should I doe to get such  
 a love to the Church of *Christ* *Quest.*

First, consider how dearly *Christ* hath loved it, that he hath given  
 himselfe for it. *Ans.*

Secondly, consider that he hath left his Church here amongst us, and  
 suffers it sometimes to be in distresse, to try our love to it. *2.*

Thirdly, consider, that if thou be a member of it, then all the rest are  
 very neere unto thee, even thy brethren and sisters. *3.*

But suppose I be willing to helpe the Church to my power, what di-  
 rection will you give me, that I may put forth that power which I have? *Quest.*

First, doe as godly *Nehemiah*, *Daniel*, and old *Eli* did, that is, enquire  
 diligently what the state of the Church is, and let me tell you, brethren,  
 I am perswaded that it is a great fault of many of us here in *England*, that  
 we doe not performe this duty as we ought, wherefore be exhorted to  
 labour at this time to find out the state of Gods Church, both in *Eng-*  
*land* and in *Ireland*. *Ans.*

Secondly, when thou hast found out the state of the Church, and so  
 consequently what it wanteth, then in the next place, consider what  
 thou hast in thine hands to supply the want thereof; thou must observe

this rule that whatsoever good God hath put into thine hands, thou art but a Steward of it; and thou art to imploy it for the good of Gods Church; all Gods people have an interest in that talent that God hath committed to thy employment.

Now, there is one talent which I am sure every child of God that is effectually called hath, though they be never so poore, and that is the talent of prayer; for indeed, it is the surest evidence to witnesse unto them, that the spirit of Christ is in them, when they can cry *Abba Father*; according to the Lawes of our Kingdome, a child cannot be proved to be borne alive, except there be witnesse that it was heard to cry, even so we say in Divinity, that every one that hath the new birth can cry to God his Father in prayer; so that I say, every child of God hath this talent of prayer.

And this talent the Lord requires they should use and imploy for the good of his Church & people, according to that Scripture, *Pray for the poace of Ierusalem, and that in Is. 62. Te that are the Lords remembrancers, give him no rest, til he set up Ierusalem, the praise of the world*; and beloved let me tell you, the exercise of this talent of prayer is charged upon all ranks and conditions of men for that the exercise of no other talent can doe any good without this, neither the governing of the Magistrate, nor preaching of the Minister, nor fighting of the souldier, nor the contribution of the rich man, will doe any good without prayer, it is prayer that brings a blessing down upon all; yea, the exercise of this talent of prayer many times doth more good then all the rest. A praying Christian (let me speake it with holy reverence) can doe all that God can doe and therefore, in 1 Kin. 8, *Salomon* reckoneth up all the hard conditions that the Church of God can fall into, and alwayes concludes, then heare thou in heaven, &c. And then God answers, *I have heard thy prayers and supplications that thou hast made before me*; with this talent of prayer the servants of God have overcome God and held his hands, in so much that the Lord, if I may so speak, hath been glad to intreat them and command them to hold their tongues, and let him alone. Beloved, as God only can remove the Churches troubles, so prayer only can prevaile with God to doe it; it is prayer that bringeth al Gods promises into performances; there is not any part of the world, but a Christian can reach it by prayer; there is not a blessing in heaven, but prayer can

Exo. 17. 11.

fetch it down; prayer can knock down enemies; when *Moses* held up his hands, *Israel* prevailed; *David* by prayer choked *Athiophel*; *Hester* and her people by prayer hanged *Haman*. So that I may say of prayer, as the Author to the *Hebrewes* saith of the faith of those worthies there

menti-



mentioned, the time would be too short, to reckon up all that a Christian can doe by prayer.

And yet alas, If are me, there are some Christians who have grace in their hearts, that have not imployed this their talent for the good of Gods Church, whose conscience will witness unto them that they have not spent an houre in their closets, in exercising this talent for the good of Gods Church: O, be humbled this day for this your selfe love, and want of love to Gods Church. And I am perswaded, that the want of this hath been the cause that the enemies prevaile so in Ireland at this time, and that things goe on so heavily at *Parliament* here at home.

Wherefore you that feare God, I beseech you be humbled for your omission of this duty, and be exhorted to set upon the practice of it. O pray, pray for the *Parliament*, O pray, pray for *Ireland*, and call upon others to pray, there is no man so meane in his estate, or weake in his body, but if he be a Christian, he may contribute something towards this great worke, though he be not able to lend a peny, yet he may give a subsidy of prayers. Beloved, if all Christians would exercise this talent aright, their prayers would be as a thundering army against the enemies of Gods Church.

But how shall I doe to exercise this talent aright?

Quest.

First be sure that prayer be prayer, let it not only be in speech, but powre out thy desires before God; and to this end get a heart truly affected with the thing thou prayest for.

Answ.

Labour to get an humble and selfe denying spirit. remember *Abraham*, when he came before the Lord in prayer, confessed he was but dust and ashes, and *Jacob*, when he came before the Lord in prayer confessed himselfe unworthy of the least of all Gods mercies; and *David* cries out, *Heare me O Lord, for I am poore.*

Gen. 18. 27

Gen. 32. 13

Alwayes when thou goest to prayer, be sure to carry thy Mediator along with thee, by faith in the promises, and begge earnestly for the Lords sake, as *Daniel* did, that so thy prayers may be fervent; O beloved Christians, if you would pray, and pray thus, you would be the most usefull people in all the world, yea, you would be the very propes of these united Kingdomes; marke it then you men of the world, you onnes of *Belial*, that have been wont to scoffe at praying Christians, and to wish them all packed hence, and at new *England*. Alas, you know not what an evill you wish unto your selves therein, if they were gone woe to you.

3.

Da. 9. 17

And thus much shall suffice to have been spoken of the talent of prayer; in the next place what outward abilities soever thou hast, thou must

and also employ for the good of Gods Church : for he that is a rich man, if he pray and hold his purse, he cannot expect that his prayers should be available.

Wherefore, if God have given thee both grace and money, I doe in the name of God beseech thee, to employ both for the good of Gods Church and people, else it is to be feared, it may be as truly said to thee, as the poore man said to the Bishop, who asking him a penny for Christ his sake, the Bishop answered, I will not give thee a penny, but I will give thee my blessing, the poore man answered, ah Master, if you loved your blessing as well as your penny, you would not give me that neither. Wherefore then to conclude whatsoever God hath given thee that may do the Church good, be willing to part with it for the Church good.

**FINIS.**

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